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VIVA PROGRESS REPORT DECEMBER 2005

The Joint Transit Committee and Rapid Transit Public/Private Partnership Steering Committee recommends the following:

- 1. The presentation by Mary Frances Turner, Vice President, York Region Rapid Transit Corporation be received; and**
- 2. The recommendation contained in the following report November 30, 2005, from the Vice President, York Region Rapid Transit Corporation be adopted:**

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that this report be received for information.

2. PURPOSE

This report provides a general description of the progress made in delivering the York Region Rapid Transit Plan during November 2005.

3. BACKGROUND

The June 27, 2002 contract, as amended, required York Consortium 2002 (YC2002) to file monthly progress reports with York Region. The third stage of Viva Phase 1 went live on November 20, 2005 and this report describes the balance of the work required to complete Stage 4, the final stage in the initial project, as well as preparatory EA work in support of Viva Phase 2.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

4.1 Year One Work Plan

The original Stage One (Year One) agreement entered into between York Region and YC2002 in June 2002 is illustrated in Table 1. The majority of the Stage One work plan components are complete and the only outstanding work, which continues, relates to the Environmental Assessments (EAs), and the current status of each is summarized below.

South Yonge Corridor

MOE has completed and publicly posted a response to comments received during the public and agency review which concluded in September. A five week period is now underway during which initial respondents may reply to the MOE posting.

Highway 7 Corridor / Vaughan North-South Link

MOE has provided comments received during the seven week public and agency review that was completed on October 26, 2005. Staff is working with MOE to address all comments. A final decision by the MOE on the EA is expected by early April 2006.

Markham North-South Link

Final report submission to MOE is anticipated during January 2006. EA Study approval is expected by mid 2006.

North Yonge Corridor

Phase I (Alternatives to the Undertaking) of the EA Study is continuing towards completion by the end of 2005. The remainder of the EA is subject to the approval of the next phase of the Viva work program.

4.2 Viva Phase 1 Design-Build Contract

Kiewit / Ellis Don (KED) anticipates billing 85% against the Viva Phase 1 Design-Build GMP contract valued at \$69.9 million at the end of November 2005. This report provides a general overview of the progress to date under the Design-Build Contract. A number of change orders have been processed to date for the Design-Build with some representing an increase in the GMP while others represent a decrease. Overall, the total change orders will be within the \$150 million budget. The information in sections 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 sets out a general overview and description of the progress made with respect to the delivery of the various components of the system. The status of these matters is being more fully addressed under the various relevant contracts for the purposes of formally documenting the legal rights and obligations of the parties in connection with these matters. Design-Build activities during November are described in Table 1.

Table 1
Viva Phase 1 Design-Build Contract

Component	Activity	Progress
Intersections	· All stops complete.	· Complete
Terminals	· Finch Terminal: All KED work is complete. GO Transit canopy is delayed until Spring 2006. · Newmarket Terminal: Exterior construction completed and interior work by GO Transit continues. . · Richmond Hill Centre Terminal: - Pedestrian bridge design 75% complete. November report indicated that site plan had been submitted to Richmond Hill; however it was still under internal review and not submitted to Richmond Hill until the end of November. Construction to commence after approval of site plan. Anticipate construction start early spring 2006.	· Complete · Complete · Construct. sched. to be determined
Terminals Cont'd	- Construction of additional platform space commenced in October and completion is anticipated for end 2005 depending on weather. · Cornell Terminal: - Discussions with landowners south of Highway 7 have commenced. Protection of laybys on Buroak to turn YRT fleet west has been requested. No further work on hospital site at this time. · York University: complete	· Underway · Delayed · Complete
Fare Collection Equipment	· SubRoute B and Enterprise - Commissioning of the Fare Collection System was completed and Handover was achieved as scheduled in November.	· Complete
ITS	· SubRoutes D & E – Handover of the transit control ITS system (both hardware and software) took place as scheduled in November and the system went live as scheduled.	· On Schedule

Component	Activity	Progress
Transit Signal Priority (TSP)	· Traffic and traffic signals are being monitored now that the system has gone live. · The fine-tuning of the TSP parameters on the live system is under way.	· Complete
Stops	Sub-routes A (Yonge Street from Finch to Bernard.) and C (Highway 7 from Town Centre to York University): Handover occurred on August 29, 2005. Sub-routes D (Vaughan N/S Link from Downsview to Martin Grove) and E (Markham N/S Link from Don Mills to Unionville Station): Handover occurred on October 10, 2005. Sub-route B (Yonge Street from Finch to Eagle Terminal in Newmarket: Handover occurred on November 18, 2005.	· Complete · Complete · On Schedule

4.3 Viva Phase 1 Vehicle Contract

A contract was entered into with Van Hool on March 24, 2004 for the purchase of 22 sixty-foot vehicles and 55 forty-foot vehicles. An option to purchase 3 additional sixty-foot vehicles and 5 additional forty-foot vehicles has been exercised. In total 55 of the 60 forty-foot vehicles and 22 of the 25 sixty-foot vehicles were received up to the end of November. The last vehicles are scheduled for delivery in late December 2005.

4.4 Viva Phase 1 Support Activities

Table 2
Viva Phase 1 Operations & Maintenance Related Support

Component	Activity
O&M Contract	· Stage 3 of Viva operations was successfully implemented on November 20, 2005. · Mobilization continues for the implementation of Stage 4 peak service from Finch Terminal to Unionville Station on January 1, 2006. · Mobilization meetings with Connex are held weekly and service implementation is underway according to plan. · Connex continues to hire and train drivers and staff.

Viva Phase 1 O&M Facilities Newmarket Maintenance Facility South Maintenance Facility	· Fully operational. · Fully operational.
Viva Phase 1 O&M Planning Support	· Service schedules for Stage 4 have been completed in Trapeze and INIT.

4.5 Communications and Launch of Rapid Transit

4.5.1 Marketing Communications

Stage 3 Service Launch

Viva Greeters were again deployed to welcome customers aboard the new routes that opened as of November 20, 2005. Once more, our Greeters handed out brochures, route maps and the Viva rider's manual to thousands of customers, guiding them through the workings of the new service and changes to fare policy affecting both Viva and YRT.

This group of lively and energetic people continue to help customers purchase tickets at oneRide and multiRide machines, validate tickets at the vivaNow validators, encourages boarding through all doors and generally offers assistance. They project a fun, lively, and people-oriented image that effectively communicates the Viva brand character and values.

Advertising

The remaining elements of the service launch advertising campaign ran in November. These included print ads in York Region News Group (with additional ads placed in the Era Banner to advertise the Viva blue expansion of service to Aurora and Newmarket) and a continuation of the cinema ad campaign (30-second pre-show advertisements in theatres across the Region) and backlit posters on university campuses. Three print ads were also placed in all York Region News Group papers to advertise the launch of "Ride on Time," our newest web promotion (more on the web promotion below under e-communications).

Research Results

Pre and post campaign launch consumer research was undertaken to help in assessing the success of the marketing and communications activities and to understand initial perceptions and reactions to Viva. The first phase of this research was conducted in late July / early August before pre campaign launch to benchmark awareness and perceptions of Viva, including the brand and aspects of the service (routes, fares, rapid transit

vehicles, etc.) prior to launch of both the service and the communications campaign. It assessed motivators and usage of public transit and barriers to usage.

The second phase was conducted in early November, at the end of the major launch campaign to determine and quantify the shift in awareness and perceptions of the service and suggest potential service gaps and opportunities.

Pre and post launch telephone interviews were conducted each with 350 target respondents. The pre interview averaged 7 minutes and the post interview 10 – 12 minutes.

To reflect the likely rider base, the qualifying sample included residents of each of the nine local municipalities that comprise York Region, aged 15 or older. Approximately 50 – 60 % of the sample were women (statistically proven to be more likely to take public transit), about one third (33%) students, at least 25% office workers, at least 25% new Canadians of Chinese / Asian origin, and included some representation by teens with little or no independent mobility. There was cross-over among the various groups and all interviews were conducted in English. Pre and post results were weighted to ensure similar sample in both phases for maximum comparability between pre and post waves.

Unaided awareness of Viva was measured at 51% (up from 12% pre launch), while aided awareness registered at 83% (up from 39%). Since launch, perceptions have registered gains in a number of areas, particularly “different”, “sophisticated” and “dynamic”. Ratings are also higher for “clean”, “comfortable”, “good for someone like me” and “fun”, suggesting a very positive initial reception for the service. Ratings suggest that Viva is exceeding initial perceptions / expectations.

In terms of usage, 11% of respondents say they use Viva regularly and 17% have used it at least once. Most (85%) say that they are sufficiently satisfied with the system to use it again. Approximately 35% say there are no reasons they wouldn’t use Viva. Those who may not use it cite various reasons including that it’s not needed, limited routes and lack of familiarity. This suggests that usage may increase if route coverage expands and as familiarity increases.

YRT, GO Transit and TTC usage were also increased and appear to be benefiting from Viva’s launch in terms of the portion of York Region residents who are using these systems. It appears that a portion of Viva users are also new users to these other systems and some Viva riders appear to be using more than one system to complete their journey.

Encouraging among the findings is that it appears that Viva will attract a portion of “infrequent” and “never” users of public transportation and shift them out of their cars; approximately 11% of occasional users would move to becoming regular users while over 20% of those who never use public transit would become at least occasional users.

Advertising appears to have broken through and was cited as the key driver of creating Viva awareness. Multiple advertising sources were cited including, light pole banners, flyers “one the street” in malls and as well as advertising in general. Already 27% say they know a “fair amount” about Viva, suggesting that while awareness is in its infancy, it is growing quickly.

Viva in the Community

Team Viva and a Viva rtv were featured in six holiday parades this month: the Maple Santafest Parade on November 13, Newmarket Santa Clause Parade on November 19, Richmond Hill Santa Clause Parade on November 20, Markham Santa Clause Parade and Aurora Santa Clause Parade on November 26, and the East Gwillimbury Santa Clause Parade on November 27. Viva and YRT staff also attended a TDM workshop in Markham on November 18, 2005.

We were contacted by CUTA and asked to provide some of our marketing, collateral, namely, our Viva rider’s manual, newsletters and Chinese advertorials. CUTA wanted to distribute them at their conference that was held in Vancouver from November 19 to November 23, 2005.

E-Communication

Vivayork.com has won a silver award in the interactive website, public service category by the Advertising and Design Club of Canada. This is the highest rank awarded in this category. The Advertising and Design Club of Canada’s 56th annual awards show was held recently at Toronto’s York Event Theatre. More than 400 awards for exceptional work in advertising, design and interactive media were given out during the sold-out event. Designed to encourage and promote the highest professional standards, these prestigious awards are widely recognized for excellence in Canada’s creative community.

A new interactive game called “Ride on Time” was launched on November 15, 2005 and is planned to run through December 13. It is an advanced 3D game, involving a character travelling through a city to catch Viva on time. The character must jump over buildings, dodge obstacles and collect viva coins all while beating the clock to catch Viva. The idea behind developing the game was to create an engaging experience that tightly integrates the Viva brand, creates excitement for the user, encourages users to share the game and, most importantly, encourages trial of the service.

As with the Viva Quiz, game prizes will include 10-ticket strips to induce trial. However, in order to further enhance interest in the game and thereby awareness of the new Viva service, local businesses were approached for sponsorship of additional prizes. The idea is to develop cross-promotions that will benefit the business, its employees and the general public and, ultimately, increase ridership.

We approached businesses in the Viva corridors to solicit for prizes and were met with tremendous generosity from the business community. Sponsors include: Acuity, Aqua

Beauty Emporium, Indigo, Motorola; restaurant sponsors include; Alice Fazooli's, Brix Napa Valley Grille and Wine Bar, Dave & Busters, Swiss Chalet, Country Style Donuts and hotel sponsors include; Courtyard Marriott & Residence Inn, Hilton Garden Inn, Radisson Hotel and Sheraton Parkway Hotel. In total, 145 prizes will be given away, 125 sets of 10 tickets to ride YRT / Viva.

Donated prizes include 5 one-night stays for hotels across York Region, gift certificates from companies across the Region, a camera phone, assorted sweatshirts and golf shirts, golf balls, and movie passes.

As of November 18, 2005, the contest is doing extremely well with over 2000 games played in total and 12 of the total 125 prizes given away. The odds of any player finding a prize token are just under 9.5%.

The website statistics show that on the day the game was launched, there were 53,000 hits to the vivayork.com website. This very nearly approached the 61,000 hits to the site received on service launch day!

The average number of hits to the site per day is now approximately 30,000 (up from October's average of 11,600). Emails announcing the game were sent to our existing subscribers list with over 55% open rate and over 35% click through rate. These numbers are well above industry predictions for email marketing.

Our electronic kiosks were located at the Angus Glen Community Centre, Bathurst Clark Library and Richmond Hill Central Library during the month of November.

Presentations

During the month of November, the following presentations were prepared and / or delivered:

- GTA Forum presentation – November 22, 2005.
- Training update presentation for Greeters and Roamers in preparation for Stage 3 launch – November 18, 2005.
- Briefing notes for Chair Fisch – Transportation 2000 Ontario, November 16.
- CUTA presentation (Closing the Sustainability Gap) – November 21, 2005.
- Municipal update presentations to be presented through November and December.

Marketing Material Produced

During the month of November, the following additional marketing materials were produced:

- Stage 3 messaging for VMS, and on-board announcements.
- Copywriting for December issue of My Transit.
- Updated shelter maps for November 20 service launch.
- Revisions to on-board maps for next opening stages.

- Driver poster for drivers of conventional transit services regarding third opening stage of Viva.
- Viva detail maps for use by call centre personnel.
- Viva frequency map which was posted on yrt.ca.
- Viva travel times map which was posted on yrt.ca.
- Transit Update handout for greeter / roamers.
- Transit Update column for Newmarket town page.
- Transit Update for Aurora html page.
- Improved graphic / test for fare machines to improve readability.
- Various signage related to stage 3 service launch.
- New animation for upper screen of kiosk which demonstrates how to purchase fares.
- Production of ads for placement in local business directories.

VIVA/YRT Rewards Program

Over the spring and summer the Viva/YRT Rewards RFP was issued, a proponents' information meeting was held and one proposal was received at closing. After careful evaluation, the proposal was deemed to be non-compliant.

On October 18, 2005 a revised RFP was issued and the submission closing was November 17, 2005. There were no respondents to the RFP and so, for the time being, the Rewards Program is being suspended.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

There are no local municipal implications associated with this report.

7. CONCLUSION

YC2002 and York Region staff continued to advance the Viva implementation program through November with Stage 3, which went live on November 20, 2005.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.